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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10, 1912.

SPEAKER BYRD'S ADVICE.

Speaker Byrd demonstrated last night by his speech before the Democratic caucus his singular and conspicuous fitness for the office as speaker of the House of Delegates. With such a summary before them of the work that Virginia has accomplished in the past and the obligations and difficulties that confront it in the future, the Legislature could have no valid excuse or explanation for being led into unwise and ill-considered expenditures.

The Times-Dispatch thoroughly agrees with Speaker Byrd that the Dairy and Food Commission, the Board of Public Health, the State Epileptic Colony, the Catawba Sanatorium and the Highway Commission are excellent and most desirable State activities. The difficulty about the creation of these departments in the first instance is the question whether the Legislature knew at the time that these laws were passed that the State did not have the money then to meet these added obligations. Now that we are informed frankly and fully as to our financial condition and know exactly to what extent we may hope to make appropriations for the next two years, it will be a comparatively easy matter for the Legislature to wisely and satisfactorily determine which of the various proposals laid before it are most deserving of State assistance.

Yet there is much of comfort and encouragement in Speaker Byrd's address. The need for fair dealing, the crying demand for a recasting of our State expenses, will bring to the mind of the Legislature, as nothing else short of some public calamity could, the need of tax reform. It is marvelous how Virginia has thriven and prospered under the cruel and unjust burden laid on the citizens of this State by tax laws that are little short of barbarous. It was under Mr. Byrd's speakership and largely due to his efforts and to the teachings of this paper that the first tax commission was created. Mr. Byrd has shown, both in the report of the commission and in his own speech, his clear and vigorous understanding of what is involved in our present tax laws. There is much before the Legislature requiring careful thought and wise action, but there is no proposition before the State of Virginia that involves the welfare of so many people so vitally and so closely as the reform of our present tax exactions. With Richmond paying more net revenue than all of the 100 counties combined, with the black counties out of their poverty contributing to the intentional or thriftless depredations of white counties in the Southwest, with overassessment in some parts of the State and gross underassessment in others, the people of Virginia are being exposed to a system that under the guise of equal handed law is intrinsically unjust as were ever the unreasonable exactions of an Oriental tax gatherer.

If Mr. Byrd is able to prevail upon the Legislature to put into actual practice the principles he has so cogently set forth, Virginians yet unborn will have daily occasion to remember with thanksgiving the Legislature of 1912.

THAT JACKSON DAY LOVE FEAST.

Democratic success, not Democratic candidates, was the keynote of the great Jackson Day banquet held in Washington on Monday evening.

It took fifteen good men and true from 2:30 in the evening till quarter past 2 next morning to tell each other and the world how deeply all past differences were buried and how confident the Democratic party was of success in 1912.

Such a lying down together of political bones and lambs has not been seen since the first party came left the Garden of Eden. The hope of success smoothes many rough places and removes much bitterness. That is why Alton B. Parker and William Jennings Bryan forgot the gold telegram at Kansas City and good should be to shake in the declaration that the only problem before Democracy to-day was how to secure for all the people the legislation and the freedom which only the Democratic party could give.

Even William H. Hearst, the prize prodigal, was welcomed to the fold, and both gave and received an editor's blessing. Ex-Governor Folk of Missouri, and Speaker Champ Clark ate at the same table and toasted the same party, and for the moment buried the hatchet. And 775 good Democrats from nearly every State in the Union yelled themselves hoarse over the statement of the party's creed made by a united leadership.

The tide has set towards restoration of the Democratic party to power in every branch of the national government. When Maine goes Democratic for the first time in forty years, when Ohio gives 160,000 majority for Harrison and elects State and county Demo-

cratic officers in sixty-five out of eighty-seven counties; when the Republicans of the Central West feel themselves abandoned and betrayed by a party that promised tariff revision and revised it up; when the progressive Republicans recall that Mr. Roosevelt advocated nearly every progressive principle and never put through a progressive measure, it is clear that the Democrats have already prepared to their hands the kind of opportunity that only comes once in a generation.

But the enduring party is the one whose aims and whose principles alike tend toward constructive statemanship. If the Democratic party is to return to power with any secure lease on a long tenure of office, the Democrats, as Judge Parker said on Monday evening, must adopt as a cardinal principle, "In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; and in all things charity." No organization as catholic as the Democratic party, no party which is based upon a principle that is as old as self-government and as wide as the confines of this earth, can ever hope to measure all of its members by the same hard and fast technical rule. But there is one unchanging and fundamental principle by which all true Democrats may be known. For, as Governor Wilson said, "Nobody denies Democratic principles, but far from everybody practices them." And the one great dominant note of Democracy is the belief—a confident, unreserved and cordial belief—that the people of a country have a right to govern themselves, and not only that the people have a right, but that the country is safer, more prosperous, more far-seeing and essentially wiser when it is governed by all the people and not by a ring or coterie or class, no matter how wide that class may be, and no matter how much material wealth it may have. By this test, and by this test only, is the true Democrat to be known, and unless all signs fail, an overwhelming majority will answer to the roll call of Democracy in the presidential election of 1912 for the purpose of putting into power a party whose chief object is the restoring of equal opportunity and the destruction of special privilege.

AN AUSPICIOUS MEETING PLACE.

For the sixth time in its history the Democratic party will hold its national convention in Baltimore. The choice of such a meeting place augurs well for the Democratic host, for it was in that city that the first Democratic convention was held, when Andrew Jackson was nominated by acclamation. The past shows that more successful Democratic presidential candidates have been nominated in Baltimore than anywhere else. Three out of the five Democratic nominees chosen at Baltimore in the past carried the country overwhelmingly, and the two that failed were defeated by war heroes. War enthusiasm had not subsided. In periods of peace, Democrats nominated at Baltimore have always won, and so the selection of the place at this time is most propitious. It was at Baltimore that the Democrats named Jackson, it was there that they nominated Polk, fully termed the "ideal President," and later it was in Baltimore that Pierce was made a victorious standard-bearer.

That the convention should meet in Maryland is most gratifying to the people of Virginia as well as to the people of the South. It is the nearest place to the South to which the gathering could be brought, and at a time when Southerners are prominently mentioned for the nomination it is most happy that the choice should be made in Baltimore. The atmosphere of that city will be friendly, the delegates will be peculiarly at home, and the National Committee has wisely chosen a historic Democratic Mecca for the convening next spring of an epoch-making gathering for Democrats. Another sign of victory appears in the sky.

THE MOVEMENT FOR CALENDAR REFORM.

Among the international gatherings announced for the present year is the conference called to meet in Switzerland with a view to reaching an agreement for reforming the calendar or modifying the calendar. Within certain circles this idea has been under agitation for some years, but perhaps public attention has been attracted to it in so far as it has been attracted, more by the ridicule to which it has been subjected than by any serious consideration it may have evoked.

While it cannot be denied that some of the proposed reforms seem little short of fantastic and are legitimately the subjects of ridicule, none the less, 18,000 to that upon has, for the greater part illustrated merely unthinking opposition to untested long established custom and to change in deep rooted custom. That is the most charitable construction that can be placed on the disposition to ridicule the proposition as a whole.

In some of its details the notion has a most practical side, bearing upon the convenience of many interests, and behind the movement are not a few very earnest practical men, who have studied the advantages of change from every possible standpoint, and who did not reach a conclusion until fully convinced that there vastly outweighed any possible disadvantages that might accrue.

Passing over what we admit strikes us as absurd suggestions and the concept of advisers of overconfidence, imaginative and poetical, of mind, and coming down to the primary and fundamental aims of the reformers, these may be briefly stated as follows: First, to devise a plan by which the

months shall be equalized, to the end that the same day of the month shall invariably fall upon the same day of the week. That this would save a great deal of trouble is obvious. Second, to simplify business calculations based on monthly periods, a feature of that innovation being a month of four weeks. This the simplest calculation will go to show would mean the creation of a thirteenth month to fill out the year, together with a special provision for the odd day and the extra day necessary for leap year.

The advocates of the thirteen-month year are numerous, the most prominent at the present time being Charles Fisher, of San Francisco, and Moses Cottsworth, an Englishman now residing in Canada, and who is father of the "International Almanac Reform League." How to reach the requisite thirteen-month adjustment, it will be readily recognized, involves a more complicated problem, and small wonder that even absurd proposed solutions have developed in connection therewith.

As to the concrete idea of reform, there is nothing new, novel or startling in it. Although it took England some two centuries to accept the Gregorian modifications, and Russia still adheres to the old system—with its wide divergence from the systems of the rest of the civilized world—the calendar has from time to time been frequently amended, "finkered" with or modified. At the same time it would be exaggerated optimism to expect any immediate changes as the result of the Switzerland conference. There will doubtless be numerous subsequent confusion before even a workable reform system shall have been agreed upon for presentation to the world, for intelligent and serious consideration. Yet, there are so many commendable factors in the basic principle of the scheme that it can hardly be doubted that the reformers will triumph ultimately. In this generation of tendency to simplify and standardize generally for the purpose of human convenience and with the object of saving as much as possible of that tremendously valuable asset, time, it is hardly probable that time itself will long be able to resist the process—the onslaught, in fact.

MAKING LAND IN THE SOUTH.

At last the Government is turning from the profitable irrigation of wild lands in the far West to the drainage of large areas of unfruitful land in the South.

The population of the country has been increasing at the rate of 1,500,000 annually and the production of our necessary food supply has not been keeping the right pace with it. There has followed a great advance in the cost of food supplies. For decades the people have revelled in the wealth of our national resources. The natural limit has been reached at last, and the government will have to develop more land in the South.

Up to this time the public domain has been so extensive that virgin land could be had for the asking. There are but few farms now to give away. Already 600,000,000 acres west of the 95th meridian have been taken up by settlers and are largely food producing. There are left but 2,500,000 acres, and much of this is wild mountain land.

The Boston Globe very truly says that "there are in the South idle lands as rich as the delta lands of the Nile." They need development by drainage. The government ought to take up this work as soon as possible.

Culpeper has lately been the scene of much activity on the part of the suffragist advance guard, and the Culpeper Enterprise says that the two Richmond speakers made a lasting impression. Not on Senator Bowers, however, for the Enterprise says he opposes votes for women. Delegate Alden Bell refused to commit himself, but the suffragists here will get after him right away and end his coyness.

At the Kaiser's New Year's reception Ambassador Lelshman wore a cocked hat, a long coat embroidered with gold lace, dark trousers with gold braid and a sword. This ought to be enough fuel for a rousing evening of screaming philippic from Senator Bailey, of Texas, upon our tendency to "ape the royalty."

If the Colonel ever does announce for the presidency, it's a shame to 1 not he does it just in time for Monday morning's paper.

Whether one likes it or not, it must be recognized that the women may not prove an inconsiderable factor in the next presidential election. In the six electoral States there are 1,000,000 women who will be privileged to vote for presidential electors, and in one of the six—California—investigation by the Secretary of State has shown that the eligible vote of the two sexes is about equal. A contemporary, which is not at all inclined to equal suffrage, wants to know how the presidential candidates themselves are going to ignore these facts and conditions. Oh, well—but we are not answering complacencies.

At first sight it is a bit startling to read these comparative values of autographs, given in a dealer's catalogue: "Sullivan, John L., pugilist (autograph letter signed), 1 p. 1852, \$6.75. Elliot, Charles W., ex-president Harvard University (autograph letter signed), 2 pp. 1873, \$5.50." That seems strange, but not much so when there is taken into account the fact that the value of an autograph depends greatly on its rarity. John L.'s literary executor will not have much material to work on.

Queries and Answers

Naming the Boy.
 Please give me some names beginning with "H" suitable for a boy. You have a wonderful material to select from, an upending list. Here is an especially musical name. So are Hanna, Hildebrand, Habakkuk, Hagai and Horod. Henry is a rather common name, though some like it. Harold is a sweet name. Hans and Hugo are good, stout names. Hadrian is an unusual name. Homer is a grand old name. If you think he will be a doctor, by all means call him Hippocrates. If he has an ugly disposition, name him Hercules. Hankon is a name not often used. Herbert and Hubert might do. If you wish to call him champion, man of note, use Harmon or Hitchcock.

Opera.
 What opera is it that has the same name as an article for domestic use? R. R.

"Indigo, or All About the Forty Thieves," an operetta, by Johann Strauss.

Votes.
 Is it true that before the Civil War a slaveholder was entitled at an election to cast as many votes in addition to his own as the number of slaves he owned? That is, one vote for every slave? R. W.

Abstinence.
 What is the meaning of "abstinence" in Marie Corelli's "Wormwood"? Is Marie Corelli considered a good author?
Abstinence is the eucharistic state produced by using abstinence. As a writer Marie Corelli is popular and many people find her entertaining. Probably she will never become a classic.

Champion.
 Was Tom Sayers, who fought John C. Heenan, the British Boy in 1850, ever champion of England? If so, when did he hold the title? When did John Morrissey win the championship of America?
 It was champion of England from 1857 to 1860. In October, 1858, John Morrissey beat John C. Heenan for a stake of \$8,000 and the championship of America, but the records obtainable at this time do not show how long he held the title.

Voice of the People

Essentials for Democratic Success.
 To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch: Sir,—It was my good fortune to have read in your paper of the 29th inst. the letter of Professor Dabney, of the University of Virginia, which gave a large prominence to the nomination of Governor Woodrow Wilson. The instructions to the next Democratic National Convention would make it a timely manifesto, if Professor Dabney had made no reference disfavorable to either party in the Bryan-underwood controversy.

In 1856, Mr. Bryan's popular vote was 6,925,135; in 1892, 6,368,133; in 1896, 6,469,101.

In the first instance, McKinley's plurality was 601,851; in the second instance, his plurality was \$48,790, and in the third instance, Taft's plurality was 1,268,801. In 1904, Roosevelt's plurality, Judge Parker opposing, was 2,245,515.

The average popular vote of the Republican candidates in the three elections was 6,447,773. The average of the Democratic popular vote was 6,368,133. The average of the Republican popular vote was 6,447,773. The average of the Democratic popular vote was 6,368,133.

The average of Mr. Bryan's vote over that of Judge Parker was 1,345,476. The average of the Democratic vote over that of the Republican vote was 1,345,476. The average of the Democratic vote over that of the Republican vote was 1,345,476.

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A TRAGEDY OF THE DIVORCE COURT.

By John T. McCutcheon.

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Thursday last, the government of the day to treat him as a rebel against the crown, and to do its worst against him in the courts of law.

He is an Irishman, both on the side of his father and his mother, the latter having been one of the Galway Lambers. A graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, where he won fame as an athlete, he speaks with a rich and rather soft Dublin accent. He is very tall, of the lanky, willowy order and justifies the title of the cypripate reporter who wrote that Sir Edward Carson "rose at great length to reply." He is the embodiment of the popular idea of Sherlock Holmes, having a thin, hatched face, an extremely dark, rather deep-set eye, a high forehead, and a sharp nose. He is a man of a very strong and intense character, and his voice and the facial expression intensify the bitterness of the spoken word. He first made his name at the trial of the "Irishmen" in 1881, before the public as prosecutor for the Irish bar, and then came prominently before the public as prosecutor for the Irish bar, and then came prominently before the public as prosecutor for the Irish bar.

His experiences in those exciting times were of the most extraordinary description, and one of the strangest was the occasion when he was called upon to prosecute William O'Brien. P. I. think, at Cork. Just as the case was about to open, a telegram from the government, hepher, was put into his hand, instructing him to get the case postponed. In spite of this, he went on with the case, and he was successful in getting the case postponed. He was successful in getting the case postponed. He was successful in getting the case postponed.

Although Sir Edward Carson bore the brunt of the fighting in connection with the so-called crimes act, he remained a member of the government. He was made solicitor-general for Ireland for a few months, but he had to wait for ten years or more, until he received the appointment of solicitor-general for Ireland. He was successful in getting the case postponed. He was successful in getting the case postponed. He was successful in getting the case postponed.

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